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## EDITORIAL COMMENT



THE two leading articles in this issue, on "Baths," written by graduates of two prominent training-schools, are representative nursing papers, such as we desire to give in every number of the JOURNAL. Nurses must teach nurses, not only in hospitals, but in private practice. There are still a number of interesting papers on "Typhoid" to be given, and we hope to supplement the "Bath" articles by a medical paper giving in popular form the therapeutic effect of water, not only in the treatment of fevers, but in its application to other forms of medical practice.

The application of hospital methods to the requirements of private practice call for great ingenuity on the part of private-duty nurses, and we especially want notes and suggestions upon these lines from the women engaged in private duty.

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DR. ROWE'S paper on "Hospital Administration," in so far as it deals with the duties and authority of the executive head, applies equally to men or women occupying such positions. More and more women are filling such positions, and the organization of the smaller institutions may well follow the lines that have been proven to be best in the larger and older hospitals. One point in his paper we wish especially to emphasize, and that is the plan he advocates for the appointment and promotion of house officers, and in this we speak from practical personal experience.

In those hospitals where the lives of the superintendent and the heads of all departments are made needlessly uncomfortable by the lawlessness of this one indispensable group of workers, the fault is in the form of organization rather than with individuals. In a hospital where there is harmony of administration we are sure to find that every person under the roof is subordinate in some degree to one executive head. Let any one department feel itself to be entirely independent of the control of the chief executive, and whether it be the kitchen, the laundry, the nursing, or the house staff, the relation of that department with the rest of the hospital will always be one of friction.

We would not be willing to admit for a moment that house officers as a class are a "peculiar people." They are simply very young men filled to the bursting point with important knowledge which they have not learned to apply to the practical affairs of life, and in just the degree that they are gentlemen, they *may* be made agreeable and harmonious members of the hospital family.

In large hospitals or small, the superintendent should have a voice in the selection of the house officers. It may be well for the medical staff to decide as to the professional qualities, but the personal and moral fitness of a young man to become a resident of the hospital family for two years should in a measure be left to the officer who must be held responsible for his conduct. Where the superintendent has a voice in the selection and promotion of the house staff, and where his or her signature is necessary upon the certificate issued to him by the hospital for satisfactory service, we venture to say there will be found very

little friction between the members of the house staff and the executive head or the heads of departments.

Every year the number of young medical men who clamor for hospital appointments far exceeds the positions to be filled. The hospital could well afford to exercise greater discipline in dealing with its house staff, to the lasting benefit of the young men and the vastly improved service of the hospital.

To many of our readers any discussion of the "house officer" or "resident staff" problem or even the subject of "hospital administration" may seem out of place in this JOURNAL, but the subjects are so interwoven with nursing interests, especially to that constantly increasing class of nurses who are hospital superintendents, that it seems to us impossible to draw sharply cut lines which shall place hospital interests on one side and nursing interests on the other. We do not agree with Dr. Rowe on all points, and we know the plan of organization he advocates does not receive the sanction of great numbers of our best women in training-school work, but it is what we personally have been accustomed to in occupying a superintendent's position in a small way, where it was possible to supervise the work more in detail than is practicable in a large institution, and where our knowledge of nursing requirements made the training-school always the first consideration. The "resident staff" problem to most women superintendents is difficult, and in that connection Dr. Rowe's paper seems of special value, and it also gives to the training-school superintendents an opportunity to reply to Dr. Rowe's proposition, and to state in the pages of this JOURNAL their objections, with the reasons for them, drawn from their own practical experience. When a gentleman of Dr. Rowe's liberal views sends a paper to a nursing journal he certainly is asking for the opinion of the great numbers of women in hospital work who have reason to be interested in hospital administration. What both men and women are seeking is a method which shall insure harmony with good discipline, and where the woman element in a hospital is so greatly in the majority, certainly the woman's voice should be heard. The advancement of nursing as a profession is of too vital importance to be ignored in the great question of hospital administration.

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#### THE NEW YORK STATE MEETING

THE New York State Nurses' Association held its regular quarterly meeting at the Academy of Medicine in New York City on January 20. The first vice-president, Miss Julia E. Baily, occupied the chair, and the attendance at both sessions was very large, especially in the afternoon, when the visiting nurses filled the hall to overflowing.

There was little formal official business to come before the meeting, and the time was largely spent in discussing the bill and measures for successful legislation.

The opening address was made by Mrs. Cadwallader Jones, who has for many years been identified with training-school work as a member of the Board of Directors of the New York City Training-School on Blackwell's Island, and has been actively interested in the movement for State registration. It was through her intercession that the late Abram S. Hewitt signed the petition signifying his approval of the bill, and she explained that this was undoubtedly his last act in support of a public measure, and that he was a man who never was known to endorse a measure unless he sincerely believed in it. The text of

Mrs. Cadwallader-Jones's address will be given with the secretary's report in the next number of the JOURNAL.

The morning session was devoted to the reports of standing committees, that of Miss Allerton, chairman of the Legislative Committee, being most important. Miss Allerton stated that the bill was now in the hands of Senator Armstrong, who would present it within a few weeks, and she urged upon the nurses the necessity of individual work in seeing to it that the members of the Legislature from their home districts were informed in regard to the purport of the bill and urged to vote for it. Much time was spent at both sessions in amicable discussion of an exceedingly instructive character.

The out-of-town members were most delightfully entertained at luncheon at the Savoy Hotel by the Alumnae Association of the Presbyterian Hospital. The guests were seated at a long table, Miss Maxwell and Miss Kirkpatrick acting as hostesses, and the occasion was in every respect most charming and was greatly appreciated by those present.

The afternoon session opened with an address by Dr. Janeway, who expressed his cordial approval of the registration movement, and he emphasized the greater value of the measure from the fact that it was an independent action on the part of nurses for the protection of the public and the medical profession. Dr. Janeway reminded the nurses that every new movement received opposition at first, and referred to the early days of trained nursing, when the most enlightened medical men objected to trained nurses. Dr. William Sands Mills spoke briefly but strongly in support of the bill. Later it was shown that hundreds of medical men throughout the State had endorsed the petition in support of the bill, hardly a name of any note being missing from the list.

It was reported by the chairman of the Committee on Publication and Press that eighty-seven letters to medical societies and ninety-two letters to women's clubs had been sent out asking for the indorsement of the movement for registration, and that the replies, that were still coming in, had all been favorable.

In the evening the Bellevue Alumnae gave a theatre party to the out-of-town members, and the opportunity to see Sothorn in "Hamlet" was indeed a rare treat. Through Miss Maxwell the members of the association were invited to visit the art gallery of Mr. H. O. Havemeyer, and on Thursday morning a party, made up principally of the out-of-town members, availed themselves of this rare privilege.

Taken as a whole, the meeting was a great success. The New York nurses were most hospitable in the entertainment provided, and the feeling of cordial good-fellowship was very greatly stimulated.

The next meeting, which will be the occasion of the annual election of officers, is to be held, as usual, in Albany the third Tuesday in April. The best time to join the society is before *that* meeting, and applications should be made immediately.

The important points brought out by the different speakers and in the discussions bearing upon the subject of State registration will be embodied in the secretary's report in the March number of the JOURNAL.